

**Nevada Division of Environmental Protection
Bureau of Water Quality Planning**

-D-R-A-F-T-

Proposed Revisions to NAC 445A.119

FACT SHEET

August 2002

Background

Section 303 of the Clean Water Act and 40 CFR 131 give states responsibility for setting, reviewing and revising water quality standards. Water quality standards include criteria that provide limits on a particular pollutant or limits on a condition of a waterbody designed to protect and support a designated use. Under Section 304(a) of the Clean Water Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publishes and periodically updates water quality criteria reflecting the latest scientific data and information on the environmental effects of pollutants. The revised criteria are used by states to modify water quality standards that provide for the protection and propagation of aquatic life and wildlife; for recreation in and on the water; public water supplies; and agricultural and industrial uses. State of Nevada requirements for water quality standards are contained in the Nevada Revised Statutes 445A.425 and 445A.565 and water quality standards for waters of Nevada are found in the Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) 445A.119 through 445A.225.

The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) is proposing to update NAC 445A.119, which summarizes water quality criteria guidelines for various beneficial uses. The proposed revisions to the water quality criteria guidelines are explained in detail in the Draft Rationale For Proposed Changes to NAC 445A.119 Water Quality Criteria For Designated Beneficial Uses. Proposed revisions include:

- 1) updating the following criteria
 - temperature criteria for water contact recreation;
 - pH criteria for water contact recreation and propagation of wildlife;
 - nitrite criteria for warm water aquatic life; and
 - total dissolved solids level in waters used for agricultural irrigation.

These updates are based on EPA recommended criteria contained in the "Gold Book" Quality Criteria for Water (U.S. EPA, Pub. No. EPA 440/5-86-001, Quality Criteria for Water, 1986. Office of Water and Hazardous Materials, Washington, D.C.)
- 2) including water quality criteria for the following uses
 - chloride criteria for protection and propagation of aquatic life;
 - total ammonia criteria for protection and propagation of aquatic life; and

· E. coli bacterial water quality criteria for recreational activities in and on the water.

Aquatic life criteria for chloride have been recommended by EPA (National Recommended Water Quality Criteria, Federal Register, December 10, 1998). EPA has recommended new total ammonia criteria for protection of freshwater aquatic life (1999 Update of Ambient Water Quality Criteria for Ammonia, EPA-822-12-99-011, December 1999). E. coli bacterial water quality criteria for freshwater have been published by the EPA in the Implementation Guidance for Ambient Water Quality Criteria for Bacteria – May 2002 (Draft).

Workshops are held to obtain comments on proposed revisions to water quality standards from federal, state and local agencies and the general public. After consideration of the public comments, the proposed standards are presented at a public hearing to the State Environmental Commission (SEC) for review and adoption. Standards adopted by the SEC are then subject to approval by the USEPA.

For questions, comments or additional information please contact:

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Nevada Division of Environmental Protection

Bureau of Water Quality Planning

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Public Workshops:

Tuesday, August 27, 2002

Nevada Division of Environmental Protection

123 W. Nye Lane

Carson City, NV 89701

Conference Room 217

6:00 to 8:00 pm

Thursday, August 29, 2002

Elko Convention Center

700 Moren Way

Elko, NV 89801

6:00 to 8:00 pm

Wednesday, September 4, 2002
Las Vegas Water District
1001 South Valley View
Las Vegas, NV 89107
Mead Conference Room
6:00 to 8:00 pm